

frequently co-operated with those who find a profit in cultivating an appetite for drink.

Mr. Bryan believes that the 8 o'clock closing law, enacted by the last Nebraska legislature, is a reasonable regulation of the traffic and he, therefore, favors the retention and enforcement of the law. He disputes the proposition advanced by the liquor interests that the right of individuals to drink includes the right to sell or give liquor to others, and he favors legislation which will enforce the law against treating.

In Nebraska county option has become an issue and Mr. Bryan believes that the people of each county should be permitted to exclude the open saloon when they see fit to do so. The exclusion of the open saloon does not necessarily deny to the individual the right to use liquor in his home or under other restrictions; it simply closes the public sale of liquor when, in the opinion of the people of the county the public sale is detrimental to the interests of the county.

Whether the people of a county should, in the exercise of their rights, close the saloons, is a question entirely separate and apart from the right to do so, and Mr. Bryan is no more willing to deny to the people of a county the exercise of a clear and undeniable right, merely because they may make mistakes in exercising that right than he is to deny people the right to vote merely because they may, in the exercise of that right, vote the republican ticket.

Is there anything undemocratic or revolutionary about these propositions?

The above measures relate to Nebraska; there are certain phases of the liquor question which are national. Interstate commerce is used to override state laws. What democrat is willing to put himself on record against the proposition that the right of the people of a state to control the liquor traffic is more sacred than the right of liquor dealers to dispose of their product in dry territory and in violation of the law?

Mr. Bryan believes that congress should pass a law recognizing the right of each state to prescribe the conditions upon which intoxicating liquors can be transported, sold and used within its borders. He also believes that the federal government should dissolve partnership with law breakers and no longer issue licenses for the sale of liquor in communities where local laws prohibit its sale. If it is thought unconstitutional to discriminate, in the issue of licenses between different communities the same end can be reached by reducing the license to a nominal figure and requiring the applicant for a federal license to give written notice to the local authorities, and newspaper notice to the local public of his intention to apply for a license.

Now let those who oppose these propositions meet them with arguments.

It would be no answer to say that Mr. Bryan intends to publish a prohibition paper, even if it were true, and it is not true. He has no thought of starting or conducting a prohibition paper. It would be no answer to say that Mr. Bryan wants to inject the prohibition question into national politics, even if it were true, and it is not true. He has no thought of advising national prohibition and does not expect to see it a paramount issue during his life time. But he will exercise his right to oppose domination of national politics by the liquor interests just as he will exercise the right to oppose the domination of state, county and city politics by them.

The advocacy of needed state and national legislation on the liquor question will in no way change his position on other questions or lessen his earnestness in urging the reforms outlined in democratic platforms.

SOMETHING OF A WARNING

The socialist victory in Milwaukee is not exclusively local in importance. It does not necessarily mean that the socialist party or its doctrines have made permanent progress in public estimation. Milwaukee tried both the republican and democratic parties in recent years and, evidently, both parties failed to make good, and the people turned to the socialists in the hope of relief.

That was a very natural movement too. Democrats and republicans alike throughout this union of states will do well to heed the warning. Prosperous and contented, in their individual affairs the people are often all too patient with public evils. But when individual burdens cause men who have seemed indifferent to give some study to public questions, then party leaders will do well to "sit up and take notice." The republican party, repeatedly trusted with power, has proved faithless to the people. The

monopolists have that party in their grasp. The democratic party ought to render real service to the people. Its leadership ought not to try to make that party shape its course in the hope of gaining the favor of the monopolists who have wrecked the republican party. The people are getting ready for a change. It will do them no good, however, if they "jump from the frying-pan into the fire." The democratic party will win and winning will continue to live to the glory of its founder if it shall meet the issues fairly and with the determination to render genuine service to the people.

THE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK

The senate has passed the postal savings bank bill and the measure is before the house. It is to be hoped that the democrats of the house will try to improve it by amendment but, having exhausted every effort to perfect it, they should support it and establish the principle, leaving further improvement to the future.

The democratic national platform of 1908 contained the following plank:

"We favor a postal savings bank if the guaranteed bank can not be secured, and that it be constituted so as to keep the deposited money in the communities where it is established. But we condemn the policy of the republican party in proposing postal savings banks under a plan of conduct by which they will aggregate the deposits of rural communities and redeposit the same while under government charge in the banks of Wall Street, thus depleting the circulating medium of the producing regions and unjustly favoring the speculative markets."

Republican success has postponed, for the present, the securing of the guaranteed national bank but there is a chance to secure the protection of savings deposits and the democrats can not afford to join with the financiers who are trying to prevent the giving of an additional security to depositors.

It will be easy enough to find flaws in any bill which the republican leaders prepare or agree to, but the principle is more important than the details and when the principle is once established the defects can be cured—the more glaring the defect the easier will it be to secure a remedy.

Depositors need more security; the guaranteed bank would have given it without bringing the government into the banking business, but postal savings banks are better than no security, and their establishment will hasten the day of the guaranteed bank. The financiers will be forced to give security in order to hold deposits.

WICKERSHAM'S "GOOD NEWS"

A Chicago dispatch says that Attorney General Wickersham declares he has good news for President Taft. "I do not believe the republican party is to be split by the divergence over tariff or other policies," said Mr. Wickersham. "I base my opinion on inquiries I have made here concerning the extent of what is described as the insurgent movement. Misunderstandings are still prevalent, and as soon as these are cleared up I am satisfied the insurgent sentiment will subside."

Insurgency may subside among some insurgent leaders, but Mr. Wickersham ought to tell the president that insurgency among the rank and file of the party will not subside so long as the republican administration continues to pull the corporation chestnuts out of the fire.

Practical Tariff Talks

In the various tariff speeches which the president has made in defense of that Payne-Aldrich bill, he has included a billion and a quarter dollars of items in the metal schedule in which there had been a decrease in duties. If the task were not an endless and perhaps wearisome one to the reader, a careful picking apart of this schedule would show the hollowness of the pretense conveyed. The people demanded a reduction because they wanted the prices of over-protected goods reduced. Mr. Taft says to them, pointing with pride to the new law, here is our pledge redeemed. Take the wire nails schedule as an example. It is only one of many that could be utilized from this schedule alone. The wire nail is in universal use. The production of wire nails annually is about \$27,000,000. These nails sell in the American wholesale market on an average of 2 cents a pound—the smaller sizes. The tariff on these under the

Dingley law was half a cent a pound, or \$10 a ton. The house cut this duty in two, but the senate restored it. In conference the duty was placed at four-tenths of a cent a pound, or \$8 a ton.

Here is the point: There was a reduction in this one item, and, therefore, wire nails went into the president's list of articles of consumption upon which the tariff had been reduced. Assume that the production is \$27,000,000 a year, that sum would be added to the president's array of beneficences under the law. The rate was reduced but a tenth of a cent a pound, or \$2 a ton, a reduction so small as to absolutely cut no figure in the price of nails, even if that price were not fixed now by the steel trust. The proof of this is shown by the fact that under the Dingley law the imports were \$3,288 in 1907, while the steel trust exported \$2,500,000 worth which it sold abroad for a less price than was charged the consumer at home. The small imports and the large exports prove conclusively that the Dingley rate was a prohibitive one, and that a reduction of a tenth of a cent a pound meant no permanent price relief to the nail user. A reduction of a tenth of a cent a pound is so ridiculously small that it could never reach half the people who use nails, and as it amounts to but 10 cents a keg the contractor is unlikely to profit either. As a matter of fact an inspection of price lists for the last nine months shows the same price range as before. And yet these \$27,000,000 production of nails is complacently included by the president in the list of one of the reductions to be thankful for.

The Germans are the parents of wire nail making. The Americans found them in control of the market when the steel business reached a fair development in this country, and like other American manufacturers they proceeded to go after that control for themselves. Their first precaution was to secure a prohibitive tariff, which kept out the foreign nails. Twenty-four years ago, according to Senator Oliver, a wire nail manufacturer of Pittsburg, the Americans took the market away from the Germans, in South America and the Orient, and hold it still. So thorough is their control of the situation that the Germans can get practically no nails at all over the tariff wall. They are able to do this in spite of the fact that the German manufacturers get a large bonus from their government. The keg is the standard of measurement. The average price of a keg containing 100 pounds of nails laid down in New York is \$2.34, or was at the time the tariff bill was under discussion.

Twenty-four years control of the home market has allowed these infants to grow so large that we now export 600 times as much as we import. At the same time that they get this big duty on wire nails they ask for and receive a duty of \$20, \$25 and \$35 a ton upon the wire out of which these nails are manufactured. As the steel trust makes the most of the wire from which these nails are made, it compels any man who desires to go into the manufacture of wire nails to either erect a wire-making plant in addition or else buy his wire from it. When a manufacturer is at the mercy of his competitor for his raw material he is not very powerful as a price-maker or price-cutter.

C. Q. D.

WHICH BONAPARTE

In a Louisville Courier-Journal editorial, Henry Watterson said: "The time has come for the people of the United States to consider Theodore Roosevelt as they have never considered him before; to take him more seriously than they have ever taken him; to realize that he is altogether the most startling figure who has appeared in the world since Napoleon Bonaparte, a circumstance not without significance and portent."

Hereafter the relations between the Louisville Courier-Journal and the editor of the Houston (Texas) Post will be strained, for commenting upon the above statement, the Houston Post editor was mean enough to say: "We love Henry Watterson beyond all the power of words to express, but the foregoing makes us tired. Doesn't Marse Henry mean Charles J. Bonaparte of Baltimore?"

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